

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

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## Unemployment rates rose faster than usual and reached higher levels than usual

In December, the nation's unadjusted unemployment rate held steady at November's rate of 5.7 percent. Wisconsin's rate rose three-tenths of a percentage point to 4.9 percent and the South Central Wisconsin region's rate also rose three-tenths of a percentage point, to 3.3 percent. The nation, the state, and five of the area's six counties had higher unemployment rates in December of 2002 than the average of the December unemployment rates from 1990 through 2001. (See graph to right.) Columbia County matched its trend rate once in 2002 and dipped below twice. Other than that, Sauk County has been the only one in the region to report below-trend rates in any month in 2002. In fact, Sauk County's unemployment rate was below trend for every month of 2002.

graph on second page.) Perhaps most striking was Marquette County's 1.1-percentage-point jump.

Amongst the employment-by-sector figures on the second page, the largest change is the loss of 2,400 government jobs in Dane County. In recent years, this decrease has been

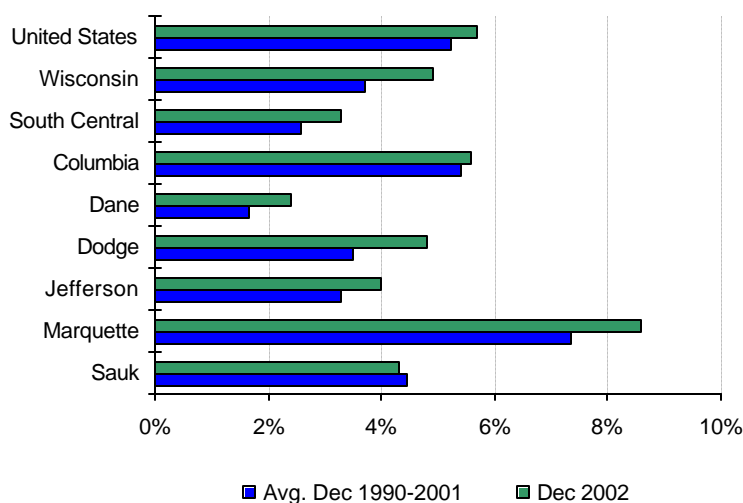
much smaller (1,000 to 1,600 jobs lost) and it has been attributed largely to work-study students and school workers who lack year-round contracts. Because October and November gains in government seem improbably large, the December reduction could reflect a return to more accurate (or at least more typical) reporting patterns.

The next largest change noted on the second page is a loss of 1,050 construction jobs in Dane County. Stronger-than-typical

December 2002 unemployment rate increases in South Central Wisconsin were generally larger than the average of November-to-December changes from 1990 to 2001. (See

gains in July, August and November were not enough to pull the county's construction sector out of a soft year in 2002. September, November and December construction employ-

Unemployment rates - not seasonally adjusted



## Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

December 2002 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<b>December 2002</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	3,050,600	445,000	281,800	28,000	47,500	43,500	7,500	36,800
Employed	2,900,000	430,500	275,100	26,400	45,200	41,800	6,800	35,300
Unemployed	150,600	14,500	6,700	1,580	2,300	1,730	640	1,570
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.9	3.3	2.4	5.6	4.8	4.0	8.6	4.3
<b>Change From November 2002</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	-5,500	-2,900	-2,400	-110	-210	30	20	-210
Employed	-16,700	-3,800	-2,700	-250	-290	-90	-70	-390
Unemployed	11,200	890	290	150	80	120	80	180
Unemployment Rate (%)	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.3	1.1	0.5
<b>Change From December 2001</b>								
Civilian Labor Force*	69,500	13,700	10,100	750	50	670	290	1,880
Employed	50,900	12,400	9,200	640	240	460	170	1,710
Unemployed	18,600	1,340	920	110	-190	220	120	170
Unemployment Rate (%)	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	-0.4	0.5	1.4	0.3

\* Includes participants residing in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers, results are rounded.

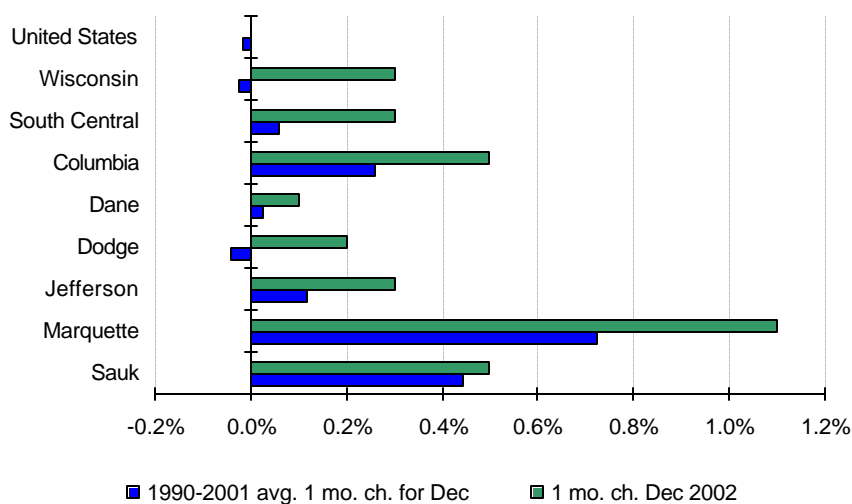
ment levels were slightly higher in 2002 than in the same months in 2001, which might suggest the beginnings of a rebound. For the rest of 2002, however, Dane County construction employment remained below 2001 levels. For every month in 2002, levels remained below 2000 levels. This is consistent with national reports that business investment which fuels demand for construction, has not yet mounted a strong, sustained comeback.

For all the worries over holiday retail, the results were fairly unsurprising. Nationally, retailers

reported lackluster growth in holiday receipts and locally, retail trade employment generally followed typical seasonal patterns. The autumn months were fairly typical for most of the region and somewhat soft for Dane County retail employment.

The upward bounce in Dodge County manufacturing employment is welcome, but falls well short of compensating for larger-than-typical declines in October and November. Nationally, factory output and capacity utilization fell in December. The manufacturing sector still struggles.

### Unemployment rate changes - not seasonally adjusted



### Payroll employment estimates - not seasonally adjusted

December 2002 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<b>December 2002</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,856,000	436,600	301,700	21,500	34,900	37,700	3,800	37,100
Construction & Mining	122,900	18,600	12,200	1,090	2,200	1,150	180	1,830
Manufacturing	564,900	67,400	30,100	5,700	11,700	11,300	1,260	7,300
Transport & Public Util.	132,200	15,200	10,600	610	1,380	1,510	80	1,010
Wholesale Trade	135,800	17,100	12,100	760	1,030	1,320	100	1,820
Retail Trade	521,600	78,100	52,700	4,100	5,200	7,500	690	8,000
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	154,000	27,500	24,100	420	810	860	120	1,170
Services	798,000	116,500	83,900	4,900	7,100	9,800	590	10,200
Government	426,800	96,300	76,000	4,000	5,600	4,200	760	5,700
<b>Change From November 2002</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	-14,000	-3,400	-3,000	10	-80	0	-140	-250
Construction & Mining	-8,200	-1,680	-1,050	-20	-170	-40	-120	-290
Manufacturing	-2,800	-50	-80	0	30	10	-10	0
Transport & Public Util.	220	-80	-20	-20	-20	10	0	-30
Wholesale Trade	690	20	30	10	-10	-20	0	10
Retail Trade	2,900	230	440	-50	30	-20	0	-170
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	130	50	0	0	20	10	0	20
Services	-20	260	90	110	0	-10	-20	100
Government	-7,000	-2,200	-2,400	-10	40	70	10	110
<b>Change From December 2001</b>								
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	1,600	9,800	7,700	840	-1,000	-20	30	2,300
Construction & Mining	2,700	-1,140	-1,150	60	-50	0	10	-10
Manufacturing	-44,000	-2,800	-870	220	-1,250	-1,070	20	140
Transport & Public Util.	-3,900	170	270	-60	70	-90	0	-20
Wholesale Trade	-2,600	-600	-530	-30	-40	-50	10	50
Retail Trade	2,500	1,090	-310	140	180	470	-10	620
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	4,900	2,100	2,100	-70	-30	30	10	40
Services	27,300	8,600	6,800	380	-130	420	20	1,140
Government	14,700	2,400	1,400	220	260	260	-30	320

\*\*Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers, results rounded.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi>.

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